

BUILDING THE BOARD CHAIR-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RELATIONSHIP

Trust-building Behaviors

The following list of behaviors was derived from research conducted by Mary Hiland, Ph.D. on the dynamics of the relationship between the Board Chair and Executive Director in nonprofit organizations. The strength of trust in working relationships is related to how many different trust-building behaviors the parties engage in: the more different behaviors, the stronger the trust. Dr. Hiland found that the organization gained an array of benefits when trust was strong in the Board Chair-Executive Director relationship.

In the context of the relationship:

- Act to reduce pain or gain reward.
- Be consistent.
- Honor agreements.
- Support the other's success.
- Define and honor roles.
- Define and manage expectations.
- Be vulnerable.
- Create safety.
- Honor confidentiality.
- Give feedback constructively.
- Receive feedback openly.
- Share information.
- Tell the truth.
- Help the other to learn.
- Value the other's input.
- Respect judgment.
- Respect skills, abilities, knowledge.
- Use the other's strengths/minimize his/her weaknesses.
- Build a collective or joint identity.
- Act for or on behalf of the other.
- Identify with the other.